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JAPAN AND CHINA

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The relations between Japan and China touch the other relations between Japan and America, and both sets of relations are a part of true or possible *international* relationship. When the relations of two or more countries are discussed, it is well-nigh impossible to refrain from being partial to one and unjust to another. This difficulty is especially great in discussing Far Eastern questions, or the position of Japan and China. Some two years ago, when Japan came out with Twenty-one Demands on China, I confess that in my writings I was partial to China and *against* Japan, but I do not think I was unjust to Japan. I also confess my writings were futile, and even more, for I secured the ill-will of the Japanese and reaped no reward from the Chinese. To help the Chinese government is rather a thankless and useless task.

However, as a mere academic question, these Far Eastern affairs are full of interest. They need calm consideration. I will endeavor to help reach a just view, by adding my personal reflections after a study from many points of view.

I begin with an ideal viewpoint. This is what is called in the West a League of Peace among all nations. In the Far East it is called the open door and equal opportunity. It means no more territorial aggrandizement, no more alliances of a few to offset some other alliance and so maintain some very unbalanced balance of power. It guarantees and protects the sovereignty and independence of every nation, great and small, with full chance for self-development.

It is doubtful whether this theory can be worked out in Europe and on the American continents. It is more doubtful whether it can be wrought out in any part of Asia. And

yet it is ideal. This is what I would like to see accomplished in China after the war. But it would mean that China is not to be ordered about by any outside power or combination of powers. It would mean that Japan is to have a chance as well as England, and the Central Powers as well as the Entente Allies. It would make China again the home of cosmopolitanism. This, indeed, would be ideal.

In former days a wonted theory was a serious modification of the above. It hit hard the sovereign rights of China. It placed her in bondage. It established a form of protectorate. It Egyptianized China. As a consul-general of one of the Allies put it to me before the war a year or two ago: "There is no hope for China. She had better be put under a *debt commission* of all the powers." According to this theory, there is complete unity—with *China left out*. I confess I do not like the thought. I think that in general all the powers have enough to do to look after themselves without trying to boss China. Self-development is better than development from the outside. The latter is an excrescence.

A still greater modification of the ideal theory, and practically a destruction of that theory, is one which has cropped up during this war. It is now advocated that even before the war closes, the Allied Powers should take China in hand. It is forgotten that they already have enough to do with the white man's burden. It is supposed by Britons that they would take the lead in this guardianship of China. Americans think that they would be on top as being the best friend of China. Frenchmen and Russians are less hopeful. The Japanese coolly reckon that if the Allies rush in now to supervise China, the chairman of the supervisory board will certainly be Japan. They all pray, in Christian or Buddhistic language, that Germany will be kept out forever. This theory strikes me as more selfish all around than the previous one, and totally inconsiderate of the wishes or needs of the Chinese.

A modification of both the ideal and the two unideal theories just outlined is that Anglo-Saxondom—Great Britain and the United States—so work it that they alone

can save China (to use a good phrase). The salvation must, however, wait till after the war. Meanwhile Britons and Americans must draw close together. Meanwhile, too, Japan, which is near by, will see to it that she alone saves China, or, as the despatches say, "assists China." This theory is pleasing to one's pride. It would of course mean much to China, if it could be brought about. Britons and Americans placed in charge would work marvels in China. But it can't be done. First because Britons and Americans have enough to do, and secondly because Japan has more leisure, more right and more opportunity to work the miracle. As for the United States, she has considerably to do in looking after South and Central America, and in keeping European and Asiatic countries away. She now has more to do in reorganizing Europe. I think she would have to leave Asia alone, even when helped by Britain.

We now come to the other practical and more probable theory, though not by any means an ideal one, that Japan and China coöperate, and that Japan alone be given the power to reform and develop China. If the ideal theory must fail, then I advocate this one. Here I am pro-Japan on a theory that seems most workable.

First, if the Japanese are to be hampered in any peaceful penetration into the Americas, into Europe, into Australia and into Africa, then they ought to have a chance in Asia, particularly China, through "propinquity of territory."

Secondly, Japanese and Chinese are near kinsmen.

Thirdly, the Japanese understand the Chinese better than do Europeans or Americans.

Fourthly, the Japanese style of living is more simple, and Japanese partnership would be less expensive than anything from the West.

Fifthly, the political problem in both countries is much the same.

Sixthly, Japan already through the currents of war has been swept up into the inner court of China's structure of State, and she is not going to retire at the mere request of Europe or America.

Seventhly, there is a big probability that Japan will be

left in the lurch, with a ring of iron around her worse than Germany ever had. When the war is over, there will come a break between England and Japan. The relations between Russia and Japan are rather spoiled. Those between the United States and Japan will be strained in proportion to the new approach of America to England and France. Japan must make some combination, or she will in time be crushed. At least Japan should make up with China.

On this theory there is merely coöperation and alliance. Japan must have no ambition to seize any more of China's territory. She should also avoid political intrusion.

Another very bad theory may, or may not, develop from the above theory, and that is, if China, even with Japan's help and advice, should refuse to reform, and keeps on fighting with herself, then in all probability, and with good reason, Japan will go further and make a protectorate of China as was done in Corea. Japan today disclaims any such intention, just as she disclaimed it in Corea and England disclaimed it in Egypt, but circumstances can arise that will compel Japan to do more. These circumstances are China's *inability to reform herself* and her readiness to forego independence of action in all her international relationships.

If, then, the first and ideal theory is to be abandoned, the last two seem the most fair and natural. It means the predominance of Japan in all Eastern Asia. If the open door is to be closed even so little, then the special interests in China should go to Japan.

True, we prefer the ideal, but can it be reached after all the havoc of the World War?